



**Set up a custom
email address with
a .au domain name.**



About this guide

This guide steps you through the process of setting up a custom email service, from choosing a .au domain name to keeping your service secure.

This guide won't go into detail on how to use specific tools or solutions – the providers of those tools are best-placed to cover that. Instead, this guide will look at the types of options available to help you decide which solution might work best for you.

Note: Brands or companies mentioned in this guide are not endorsements and are illustrative only. Prices listed are indicative as of June 2026.

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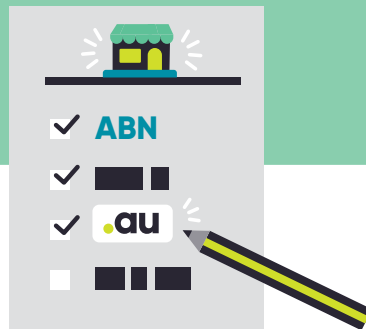
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Why your business needs a custom .au email address

A strong digital presence is a must for most businesses, and email is an important but sometimes overlooked component. A custom email using your own .au domain name can be a simple way to build your brand with every email you send. Free email (freemail) services from major platforms might be convenient and easy to set up but lack the credibility and professionalism businesses require. Using a custom email address like you@forexample.au (instead of yourbusiness26_au@gmail.com) has several benefits for small businesses.



1. It looks more professional and credible

A personalised, custom email using your own domain name signals your business is established and legitimate.

2. It builds brand recognition

Every email you send from your business domain name reinforces your brand.

3. It's flexible, secure and you're in control

With your own .au domain name, email addresses are independent of individuals.

Staff can come and go without changing contact details. Addresses like info@, sales@, and accounts@ can be shared or redirected. You can also change email providers later without changing your public-facing email address. Your email identity stays with the business, not the service you're using.

4. It improves trust and deliverability

Emails from custom domains are less likely to be sent to junk or flagged as spam when set up correctly.



5. It allows you to build your own audience

Your own .au business email allows you to build up your own audience for tailored, direct communications to build your brand and community at scale.



Don't put business email in the 'too hard basket'

It's easier to set up a custom email than you might think.

You don't need to understand all the technical processes behind the scenes, but you should think about how you want your business to show up every time you send an email.

Whether you do it yourself or work with a third party, setting up custom email is one of the simplest and most effective upgrades you can make to improve trust, professionalism and confidence in your business. Once set up, it quietly works in the background, leaving you to concentrate on running and growing your business.

Your address online: Get your .au domain name

The first step to set up your custom email address is to secure your .au domain name.

A domain name is a human-readable internet address. It's what you see in the address bar in your web browser or after the '@' symbol in an email address.



Learn more about domain names and how they work.

auda.org.au/dns-explained

.au domain names

.au is the country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) for Australia. A .au domain name is a trusted signal that you have a verified connection to Australia. To hold a .au domain name you need to provide information verifying your connection to Australia, such as a valid ABN or a form of ID.

This information is validated when you first register and when you renew your domain name. It's a big part of why .au is trusted: you can trust that the holder of .au domain has a verified, credible connection to Australia.



What .au should I choose?

Within the .au domain there are different namespaces, each with their own purpose:

	com.au	For businesses with a connection to Australia
	.au direct	For individuals and organisations with a connection to Australia
	net.au	For businesses with a connection to Australia (often used by technology-focused companies)
	org.au	For not-for-profits and eligible social enterprises registered in Australia
	id.au	For Australian individuals
	asn.au	For unincorporated associations

For a business, we recommend registering a domain name ending in either com.au or .au direct (e.g. getyour.au).



.au namespace options for other entities can be found at auda.org.au.

Choose a domain name provider

.au domain names are registered through companies offering registration services – usually referred to as registrars, or domain name providers.

There are many different domain name providers you can use to register your domain name. When choosing a provider you should consider:

- Your budget
- The level of support you may need
- The tools and products they offer which are relevant to you.

Many domain name providers offer different packages with inclusions aimed at businesses in different stages.

You do not need to have all your services – such as domain name, hosting or web platforms – with the one provider, although it can sometimes be easier if you do.



Explore domain name provider options by searching for a .au domain name at getyour.au.

Cost of a .au domain name

On average, you can expect to pay around \$20 per year (as at June 2026) for your .au domain name.

Providers often run promotions for significantly less for the first year of a multi-year registration. When weighing up your options it is worth considering the cost of the domain name licence over multiple years, not just in the first year.

Why choose a .au domain name?

.au domain names are highly trusted by Australian and global internet users.

Our research shows:

- .au domain names are well recognised by consumers
- com.au is the most trusted type of domain name in Australia
- Half of Australian consumers will only buy from a website with a .au domain name.

.au is a marker of trust online that shows your business is:

- Trustworthy and secure
- Australian.

Learn more about why .au domains are so highly trusted at auda.org.au/whyau.



auda.org.au/whyau



Choose the right .au domain name

The right domain name can become a key part of your brand, so putting some thought into it early is a smart move.

Choose a domain name that:

- Reflects you, your organisation or the services you offer – think of it as a distinctive brand asset like your logo, you want customers to be able to associate it with your business
- Is short and simple
- Avoids hyphens and numbers – these can make it more difficult for people to get right and can cause issues with spam filters
- Can be easily understood when said out loud
- Doesn't infringe on a registered trade mark.



Once you've chosen your name, check it's available by searching on getyour.au.

Registering your name

Once you've selected your preferred domain name and confirmed it's available, it's time to register it via your chosen domain name provider.

You'll need to verify your identity with your selected provider, so make sure you have relevant documents to hand.

Remember: To keep your .au domain name, you need to be eligible for the whole licence period. Make sure your ABN and business registrations are up-to-date.

Your domain name will be ready for use shortly after you've completed the registration and checkout process.

Well done, you're on your way to your own custom email address.



Choosing an email service

There are different approaches to creating a custom email address using your .au domain name. Pricing and setup will vary depending on the type of service and provider you choose. It's common to see email services bundled with other related services such as website hosting.



You do not need to have a website to use an email service with your .au domain name.

Below we set out some types of email services you might consider when setting up your custom email.

Note: Any brands/companies listed below are not endorsements and are intended to be illustrative only. Prices are current as of June 2026.

Option 1: Email forwarding only

Difficulty: Easy to moderate

Email forwarding is the most basic option. It allows emails sent to your custom email address (e.g. info@forexample.au) to be forwarded to an existing mailbox such as your personal Gmail or Outlook account.

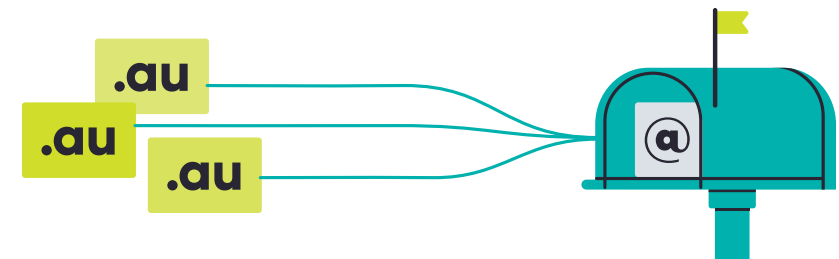
In this setup, your custom email address is known as an alias as it provides an alternative public address, but uses your existing freemail inbox.

Indicative Cost

- Up to ~\$5/month via your domain name provider. Some providers offer email forwarding at no additional cost. (As at June 2026.)

Setup: To set up email forwarding you'll need to specify:

- The email alias you wish to use e.g. you@forexample.au
- Where email sent to the alias should be forwarded – this can be your existing freemail address.



This is done with the forwarding tools in your domain name provider's domain management control panel.

You can send email from an alias via your freemail account, but it can run into deliverability issues (e.g. being flagged as spam or suspicious) if not configured correctly. You'll need to configure email authentication (see p. 13 for details) or have a Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) server specified.

This works well if:

You're starting out and you want to display a professional-looking address but don't need a separate business email service yet.

Option 2: Hosted email

Difficulty: Moderate

Hosted email solutions offer a full-featured email experience. With this type of solution, the email hosting provider hosts one or more mailboxes for your domain name.

Options range from email-focused solutions such as Titan Mail and Proton Mail to full productivity suites like Google Workspace and Microsoft 365.

These services can include features like:

- spam and virus filtering
- shared addresses (which allow multiple users to receive emails sent to a centralised address e.g. support@forexample.au)
- access to your inbox via a web browser (often called webmail access).



Productivity suites also offer additional features including calendars, contacts, file storage and collaboration tools. If you currently use a free version, you'll likely be familiar with the interface.

Hosted email can be configured to work with popular email applications (sometimes called clients) including Outlook and Apple Mail to send and receive email, and sync across devices.

This works well if:

You want a business email with more features that can scale as you grow, and help you leverage email in your marketing and operations.

Indicative cost: (Prices as at June 2026)

- Email focussed services \$3–\$8 per mailbox per month.
- Productivity suites: \$12–\$25 per user per month

Pricing will vary based on the amount of storage space you choose and whether you choose to pay on a monthly or annual basis.

Setup: Setting up a hosted email service is like signing up for any online platform – you create an account and set up your mailboxes (e.g. info@forexample.au or name@forexample.au). The key additional step is connecting your domain name by updating its DNS records so emails are routed through your email provider. It's easily done and your provider will have detailed instructions on how to do it.

Set up email authentication

Email authentication helps prove emails sent from your domain name really are from you. It protects your business, your customers and your reputation. Email authentication is not usually "on" by default and requires you to set it up.

Enabling authentication can improve the deliverability of your emails. Services like Outlook and Gmail filter unauthenticated incoming mail, sending it to a spam folder or flagging it as suspicious.

Setting up authentication

Enabling authentication involves creating additional DNS records for your domain name. The steps to do this will vary depending on your email solution but your domain name provider or hosted email service provider will have detailed instructions on it. Tools like [MXtoolbox.com](https://mxtoolbox.com) and dmarcly.com can also help generate the information you need.

The three common authentication settings

Most email authentication setups involve three types of DNS records.

1. SPF (Sender Policy Framework)

This setting tells the internet "These servers are allowed to send email from my domain name."

2. DKIM (DomainKeys Identified Mail)

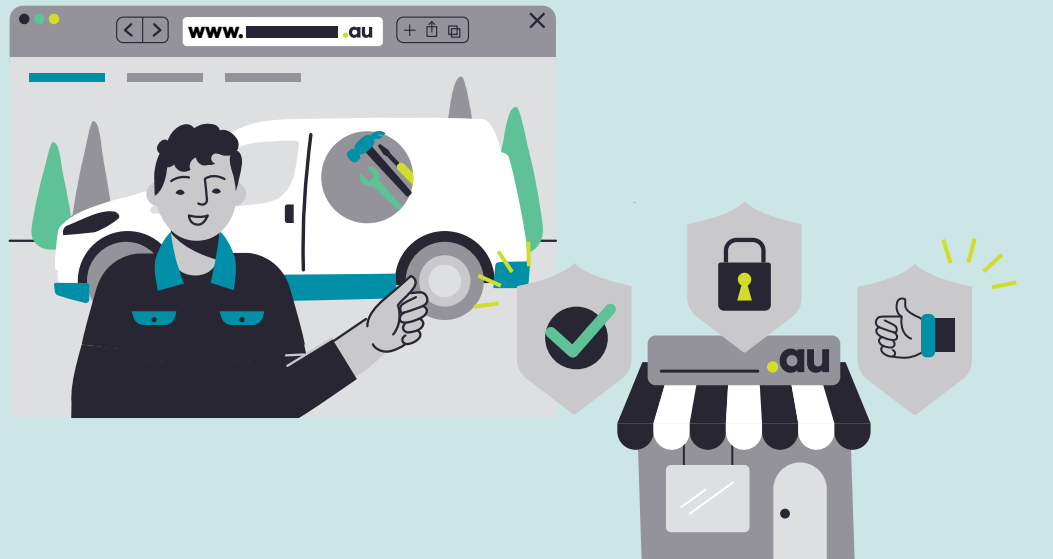
You can think of DKIM as a tamper-proof seal on your email.

DKIM adds a digital signature to your outgoing email that checks to confirm the message really came from your domain name. This helps verify that your email has gone straight from your outbox to someone's inbox, and wasn't intercepted or changed in transit by a malicious actor or third party.

3. DMARC (Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance)

DMARC tells receiving email systems what to do if a message fails the SPF and DKIM checks – you can specify if it should quarantine, reject or deliver suspicious email.





Security and your .au email

Good online security practices should extend to your email setup. There are simple steps you can take to keep your email service secure and operational.

Keep your accounts secure

Depending on your set up, your email service may involve services from different providers. Keeping those accounts as secure as possible is crucial to keep your email service secure.

Passwords

Improving your password hygiene across all your services is one of the simplest and most effective security steps you can take.

- Don't reuse passwords from social media or other services
- Avoid obvious words like your business name or "Password123"
- Use long passphrases (e.g. a combination of random words)
- Consider using a password manager to generate and store secure passwords.

If you're using email forwarding to a personal account, make sure your personal inbox is also secure.

Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA)

Multi-factor authentication requires a second step when logging in, such as:

- A code sent to your phone
- An authentication app
- A security key.



This means even if someone guesses or steals your password, they still can't easily access your account. Most email providers offer MFA, so enable it immediately if it isn't on by default. For business email, MFA should be considered essential, not optional.

Limit administrator access

Only give full admin access to people who truly need it. Fewer high-level logins mean fewer opportunities for mistakes or breaches.

If you use a productivity suite (e.g. Google Workspace, Microsoft 365), shared inboxes or multiple staff accounts it's best to make sure:

- Each person has their own login
- Admin permissions are restricted
- Old staff accounts are removed promptly.

Keep devices secure

Your email is only as secure as the devices that access it and good security practices need to extend to those as well.

Make sure:



- Laptops and phones use strong passcodes
- Devices auto-lock when not in use
- Operating systems and apps are kept up-to-date
- Lost devices can be remotely wiped (if supported)
- If you use public Wi-Fi, avoid logging into sensitive accounts without secure connections.

Actively manage your domain names

Keeping track of your domain name renewal and maintaining current contact details is key to maintaining a continuous email service.

If you don't renew your domain name and it expires:

- Your email will stop working
- DNS settings may reset
- You could lose control of your domain name and associated email address.

Domain name providers are required to contact you when your .au domain name renewal date is approaching, so ensure they have the most up-to-date contact details and check you're receiving their messages.

Many domain name providers also allow you to enable an auto-renew function which can make things easier. Maintaining your eligibility and keeping your payment methods up-to-date is key in this instance.



Find out more about
renewing your .au domain
name at auda.org.au.



auda.org.au/manage



Problems with your domain? auDA can help.

If there are issues with your .au domain name registration, and your domain provider isn't responding, you can escalate issues to auDA via our enquiry form.



[auda.org.au/
contact](https://auda.org.au/contact)

What's next?

If you've made it this far and have a functioning custom email address, well done! You're well-placed to continue building a credible, trustworthy online presence.

Create a simple website to match your email

Many small business owners put off building a simple website, especially if they've never built one before. But it's now easier than ever to build a website for your business.

For most businesses, a simple brochure style website can meet their needs. We've put together a guide on how to build your own website.



→ Read our guide:

Build a Website for
Your Small Business

auda.org.au/websiteguide



Use your email for marketing

Email is one of the most effective ways to stay in touch with customers, promote your services, and grow your business over time.

Many small businesses begin by sending updates to existing customers, following up after a sale or enquiry, or sharing news and product updates.

Beginner-friendly tools such as Mailchimp, MailerLite or Brevo can help you send simple newsletters and manage your contact list as you grow.

Email marketing is an entire discipline to itself. As your email marketing becomes more regular or important to your business, you may want to seek advice or support on areas such as designing effective campaigns, creating content, managing contact lists and understanding and meeting legal requirements.

Glossary

Alias

An alternative email address that forwards email to a specified inbox.

DKIM

DomainKeys Identified Mail. DKIM adds a digital signature to your outgoing email that checks to confirm the message really came from your domain name. This helps verify that your email has gone straight from your outbox to someone's inbox, and wasn't intercepted or changed in transit by a malicious actor or third party.

DMARC

Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance. This tells receiving email systems what to do if a message fails the SPF and DKIM checks – you can specify if it should quarantine, reject or deliver suspicious email.

DNS

The Domain Name System. Enables users to find and connect to websites and email addresses by mapping Internet Protocol addresses to their corresponding domain names.

DNS records

A set of instructions for what should happen when web traffic reaches a domain name.

Domain name

A human readable internet address used for emails and websites e.g. info@auda.org.au, auda.org.au.

Freemail

Free email services such as Gmail and Outlook.

Hosting

A service that allows you to send, receive and store email messages on a server.

Internet Protocol (IP) address

A unique series of numbers identifying where a website or email address is hosted online.

MX record

A mail exchange record – a type of DNS record that directs email to a specified name server.

Server

A computer that can store and send data to other computers over a network.

SMTP

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol, the standard set of rules for sending email messages between servers.

SPF

Sender Policy Framework. This setting tells the internet "These servers are allowed to send email from my domain name."

Email setup checklist

1. Secure your domain

- Choose and register a clear, simple .au domain name.

2. Choose an email service

- Choose a service or approach based on your needs
- Connect your domain name

3. Set up email authentication

Ensure your email is getting through by adding the following DNS records

- SPF
- DKIM
- DMARC

4. Keep your email secure and maintain it

- Strong passwords
- Enable MFA
- Keep on top of your domain renewals

5. Next steps (optional)

- Explore email marketing
- Build your .au website



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About .auDA

.au Domain Administration Limited (auDA) is the trusted administrator of the .au domain name system, which is Australian critical infrastructure, supporting more than four million .au domain names.

auDA is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation, endorsed by the Australian Government to innovate and invest in the Australian internet ecosystem to improve the utility of the .au domain for all Australians.

Through its steady stewardship of the .au domain and support of internet governance through multi-stakeholder decision making, auDA strives to ensure the internet remains open, free, secure and interoperable.

Research figures quoted in this guide are from the auDA market research conducted by Sagacity Research in February 2026.



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